

## Bloomfield Citizen.

WEEKLY JOURNAL

PUBLISHED BY

WILLIAM A. RITSCHER, Jr.  
at Bloomfield, Essex County, N. J.

Office: 302 Glenwood Avenue

Subscription, \$2.00 per year, in advance

Six months, \$1.00; Three months, 50c.

Entered at the Post-office at Bloomfield as second-class matter.

THE CITIZEN solicits contributions from the general public on any subject—political, religious, educational, or social—so long as they do not contain any personal attacks.

All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, not necessarily for publication, but as an evidence of good faith.

Advertisements for insertion in the current week must be in hand not later than Friday noon.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1904.

## KEEP DOWN THE TAX RATE.

The Town Council's action Monday night in adopting a scheme of municipal ownership of the fire-houses undoubtedly means an expenditure of about \$30,000 and the entailing upon the tax-payers an increased annual appropriation for fire department maintenance.

The net amount that the Council's fire-house plans call for is \$22,750, but other additional expenditures, such as the purchase of the fire bell and the erection of a tower for it, and provision for the fire-alarm system and the readjustment of fire-alarm apparatus and a dozen or more contingencies that will arise before the new order of things is thoroughly established will run the total expense up to \$30,000, and if the Council has fully determined to carry out the plans adopted Monday night it would be more safe to make the necessary bond issue \$30,000 than less. Monday night's action points with absolute certainty to an increase in the fire appropriation and a corresponding increase in the tax rate of the town and another stimulant to that dissatisfied element among the body of tax-payers who are constantly harping that the tax-payer's burden is of all things the least considered by those responsible for the administration of public affairs. It is claimed by those who are advocating the erection of fire-houses that the work is an absolute necessity; that the fire companies are homeless, or worse than homeless, and as Councilman Walker says, he would be ashamed to take a visitor to the town on a tour of inspection of the fire-houses or the fire-alarm system. There is no disputing the fact that the fire department is in a demoralized condition in so far as headquarters are concerned. But this demoralization is not of sudden growth, like all other kinds of fungus growth indicating rottenness; it must have been coming on for years and tax-payers have a right to ask why the demoralization has been permitted to reach its present irremedial stage. There has been laxness somewhere. Some may say it is the system. Perhaps it is, but the same system applies to the Excelsior Hose house that has applied to every fire-house in the department, and there is no such demoralization apparent there as in other fire-houses in the department. Excelsior Hose house is now, and always has been a credit to the town, while the other houses are a discredit. It will be well for the Councilmen to inquire why that is so and to what causes it is due, and then stop to think whether or not new fire-houses are going to effect the regeneration of the fire department that is looked forward to. The New York and New Jersey Telephone Company kept the fire-alarm machinery in such shape that it was a matter of pride and pleasure to show it to visitors. Is a new building going to restore that happy condition of affairs?

It is, however, beyond dispute that a large portion of the fire department is now in such a deplorable situation that something must be done. As before stated, Excelsior Hose Company appears to be the only redeeming feature of it. Opinions may differ as to the causes of the degenerated conditions of the fire-houses, and new houses may be a way out of the trouble, even if a doubtful one. Whatever way is taken for the rehabilitation of the fire department, the tax rate should be the chief consideration, and whatever plans are put into operation should be carried out with a view to reducing the burden of taxation, rather than increasing it.

The star feature of the fire-house plans adopted Monday night is the combination fire-house on the Bloomfield avenue site for the accommodation of Essex Truck Company and Phoenix Hose Company. The estimate for that building and property is \$13,750. The plans submitted by Mr. Walker call for an attractive, well-appointed two-story brick structure. The estimate furnished is the net cost, allowing for no improvement of the grounds, nor for bell, bell-tower or fire-alarm system. It is evident that the cost of that building will exceed by many hundreds of dollars the net estimate given by Mr. Walker.

Again the plans also add in an independent way another company to the fire department, and that in a short time will add materially to the cost of main-

tenance of the department. Under present conditions of taxation Mr. Walker's combination building plan should be curtailed, and the addition to the number of fire companies should be postponed for at least another year.

Mr. Walker's plan for a combination firehouse on the Bloomfield avenue site admits of much elaboration, and it is a plan that can be worked out by degrees and may eventually be made an economical feature in the administration of government. In fact it can be made to meet all the requirements of the town that the B. N. Dodd building was so admirably adapted to meet, but of course, not for such a comparatively low cost. One story of the structure proposed by Mr. Walker could be erected in the near future, and so constructed that an additional story can be added when the town finances will permit of it, and possibly a third story, and in that case the building could be used for all municipal purposes, and a large saving in rentals effected.

With respect to the Montgomery Hose Company's building, admitting all that may be said in favor of it, there is no question at all but what it is an ill-timed measure at this period of excessive taxation, and it is somewhat surprising that the Council countenanced the project, aware as they must be of the public discontent with regard to taxes.

It would be a welcome delight if the Town Council, the Board of Health and the Board of Education would work in unity for a reduction of public expenditures all along the line, in order that the tax rate could be reduced to such a figure as would attract people here from other places. The present rate frightens people away, and it is the general admission of real estate men, both in and out of town, that it is almost impossible to handle Bloomfield property on account of the high tax rate prevailing in the town. The Council has embarked upon a programme of expenditures that, instead of allaying the public alarm, has a tendency to aggravate and increase it. Councilman Walker will no doubt concede any modification in his plans that is the direction of economy and lower taxes, and if it is shown that by a process of slow degree the Bloomfield avenue building can eventually be made one of great utility, he will undoubtedly accept any proposition along the line of a less expenditure this year than is necessary for the ultimate completion of the building.

The Council is wading deep into bonding schemes, but bonds must eventually be paid, both principal and interest, and the obligations rest upon the prosperity of the residents of this town, and there is a peculiar moral responsibility resting upon the governing officials in the matter of issuing bonds.

Many people are depriving themselves and living a life of self-sacrifice in order to pay off mortgaged indebtedness on their homes or to avoid placing such encumbrances upon their property, and it is a serious and alarming matter to such people to see the governing officials loading the town with a bonded indebtedness that will lie heavily upon their homes. The majority of tax-payers in this town are people who find it difficult to meet their tax bills, and it is these people who should be largely considered by the members of the Town Council, and whatever can be done to lessen the tax rate should be done, and it is obvious that one of the easy things to do is to defer action upon the new fire-house in Montgomery street until a more opportune time and to curtail the plans for the Bloomfield avenue building to extend over a period of three or more years.

## Water Supply Inspected.

The Water Committee of the East Orange City Council went on a tour of inspection last Friday. The pumping station at the Grove street wells was first inspected, and it was found to be turning out 1,700,000 gallons daily. Then the work on the pipe line on Clinton street was inspected. Proceeding to the site of the new supply at White Oak Ridge it was there found that twenty-six wells were in operation, with everything in a satisfactory condition. There will be forty-two when the equipment is complete. The party returned home at 5 o'clock. It consisted of Farnham Yardley, Chairman of the committee, William Carlwell, Chairman of the City Council, and Messrs. Greer, Balgrie, and Brown of the Water Committee, and Lorton C. McDermott, Superintendent of the Water Department.

## Underwriters' Meeting

The annual banquet of the Life Underwriters' Association of New Jersey will take place Thursday, February 25, at 6 o'clock, in Newark. The speakers will include the President of the National Association, Mr. N. H. Ward; ex-Governor Foster M. Voorhees; President Bankers' Life; Moore Sabin, Vice-President Security Trust and Life and the Rev. Dr. H. Rose of Newark. The officers of the New Jersey Association for the current year are: President, Theodore T. Johnson, Mutual Life; Vice-President, Robert B. Cornish, Mutual Benefit; Treasurer, Clark P. Williams, Metropolitan; Secretary, L. B. Osborn, Prudential; Chairman of Executive Committee, O. F. McCord, Penn Mutual; Executive Committee—O. L. Gooding, Northwestern; G. A. Simmons, Home; Jesse C. Greene, Provident Savings.

## An Ethical Question.

The Advisory Board of the Fire Department appointed to act with the Fire Committee of the Council in the matter of new fire-houses held a meeting on Wednesday night, at which the Chairman of the Fire Committee and the Chief Engineer were present, and it was decided to engage John F. Capen as architect of the new fire-house it is proposed to build in this town.

Mr. Capen has been acting in an advisory capacity with the Fire Committee of the Council for some time past, and has done a large amount of advisory work in making plans for fire-houses and town halls. The Washington street site, the Nash property and the B. N. Dodd building were projects submitted to Mr. Capen to prepare plans showing how the respective sites could be utilized for public purposes. Now that the Council has decided to build fire-houses the Fire Committee is morally bound to engage Mr. Capen's services as architect, but there is a difficulty in the way of carrying out that desire. The main structure to be built is the combination fire-house on Bloomfield avenue. It was by adopting an amendment offered by Councilman Walker that the Bloomfield avenue site was selected, and a part of that amendment was the adoption of plans for a building. The plans for the building included in Mr. Walker's amendment were prepared by Mr. Lamb, a Newark architect, with the distinct understanding, Mr. Walker says, that if the plans were not adopted there was to be no charge for the work. In Mr. Walker's opinion, however, the plans he submitted were virtually adopted when his amendment was accepted, and the plans were frequently alluded to in the course of the debate—and, in fact, were the central figure of the debate—and Mr. Walker is confident that every member of the Council understood that the plans were as much a subject of issue as the site. The question that has been raised by the action of the Firemen's Advisory Board is a delicate one, and it is feared that the fire-house matter is not yet safely out of the woods.

## Vineland Home Defended.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN: SIR: The extracts which you published from the report of the standing Committee on Dependents of the New Jersey State Civic Federation upon the Home for Disabled Veterans and their Wives, are very apt, indeed, to arouse the indignation of members of the G. A. R., and should likewise affect all right-minded and patriotic citizens of the State. While I have never visited the Home at Vineland, in a small degree, during my official connection with the Department of New Jersey, G. A. R., I had something to do with getting the Legislature to enact laws establishing it. The refutation of the statement that "they are as able-bodied as most men of their years," comes very clearly and beyond contradiction in the fact that the applicants, my wife and I, are in need of it, and have not the ability to procure the means sufficient for our comfortable support and necessary care and attendance, which facts have, to be sworn to before a magistrate, who makes a certificate that he knows them, and that their statement is true. This is further substantiated by a sworn statement of a duly qualified physician of the State; and, finally, has to be backed up by a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas.

Furthermore, the applicants are obliged to make a statement as to how many children they have living, and the children's circumstances.

The most horrible thing about this Home, which agitates this Standing Committee, is the fact that the inmates have a beautiful building and most delightful grounds, and a menu which permits them to put into their stomachs food which they cannot enjoy, because they were not brought up to it and were not used to it, being composed of the men who stood behind the guns, and not an officer in the bunch. Then to think that these men, who slept upon the ground, with the soft side of a stone for a pillow, ate hard-tack, pork and beans, and other indigestible stuff in the army, now absolutely sleep in comfortable beds, have electric lights, and luxuries they were not built to enjoy.

The beautiful place the veterans occupy was obtained way below the market value, and the keep of these disabled veterans—who to-day are of more use to the State than the members of that committee would be if they lived a thousand years—does not cost per capita as much as the State pays out for the care of its criminals. Fortunately, the large majority of this State, irrespective of party, are patriotic citizens, and do not count money appropriated for its disabled veterans as wasted; but, on the other hand, have only been returning, in a very small measure, what is due to them. Our noble Lincoln said: "All that a man hath will he give for his life; while all have given of their substance, the soldier very often yields up his life for his country, therefore is he worthy of all we can do for him." When the G. A. R. has passed away lofty monuments will be without doubt erected to its memory, but in my humble judgment the care given the veterans while living will be a perpetual memory and a blessing to the people.

Each year the number of disabled veterans is increasing, and these institutions will have to be enlarged and increased to properly care for those who have no one to care for them, who took their lives in their hands and stood the fiery ordeal, resolved that the republic should not perish.

Respectfully,

SAMUEL G. HAYES.

## Basket-Ball.

In the Catholic Lyceum's basket-ball tourney Saturday night, Team A defeated Team E by the score of 12 to 8. In the preliminary contest the Lyceum third team won from the Eagle A. C. by the score of 22 to 20. It was a nip and tuck struggle in the tourney game, Team A winning in the last few minutes of play. The line-up:

Team A.	right forward	Team E.	right forward
O'Neil	left forward	J. Conroy	left forward
Lynch	center	E. Conroy	center
Stegelsen	right guard	Marion	right guard
Burns	left guard	Drudy	left guard
Caffrey		Woods	

Plenty of excitement was furnished in the preliminary game by the closeness of the contest throughout. At no time did the Lyceum players have a big lead. The line-up:

Lyceum 3d Team.	right forward	Eagle A. C.	right forward
Davis	left forward	Caruthers	left forward
Caffrey	center	Osborne	center
Mahoney	right guard	Mets	right guard
Conroy	left guard	Squires	left guard
Stegelsen		Whitehead	

## Patents Issued.

Patents issued to Jerseymen and reported for the CITIZEN by Drake & Co., solicitors of patents, corner Broad and Market streets, Newark, N. J.:

Key, James P. Clark, Newark; semi-elliptic spring, E. Cliff, East Orange; shingling tool, Eugene H. Cokelair, Glen Ridge; electric motor, Christian Fiechmann, Bloomfield; forging suspender, E. F. Galloway, Newark; button fastener, G. Kremenitz, Newark; cover for making packing bands or rings, E. G. Roberts, Red Bank; horse shoe pad, J. F. Robinson, Rockaway; means for holding piano tuning pins, G. Buckstahl, Rutherford; typewriting machine, Jacobs W. Schuckers, Newark; panel board, H. O. Swaboda, East Orange; doll, A. J. Thowiese, Newark; commutator for dynamo-electric machines, F. W. Young, East Orange. Designs—Collins (two designs), F. Edelmann, Weehawken. Trademarks—Welding Compounds, Welding Compound Company, Paterson.



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has also been engaged for the second concert and will be secured for the first also, if his engagements will permit. This combination will afford the people of Bloomfield and vicinity an opportunity, without leaving their own town, of listening to as fine a concert of its character as can be heard anywhere, and at a smaller cost.

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4.00 Hockey Skates,	3.00	(Men's and Women's)	
3.50 " "	2.50	1.25 Clamp Skates,	.90
3.00 " "	2.25	.90 " "	.70
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